

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSM-03 IO-13 HA-05 CIAE-00  
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05  
OMB-01 A-01 OPR-02 CA-01 OC-06 CCO-00 MCT-01  
TRSE-00 ACDA-12 EB-08 AGRE-00 SY-05 /128 W  
-----130300 251256Z /46

O R 251200Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7275  
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM  
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG  
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER  
COMSIXTHFLT  
CTF SIX ZERO  
CTF SIX ONE  
CTF SIX TWO  
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO  
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA  
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN  
DIA WASHDC  
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER  
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 1631

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE  
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION, MARCH 25, 1400 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 1620 (DTG 241400Z MAR 78)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE CEASE FIRE CONTINUES TO HOLD.  
THE FRENCH ESTABLISHED A HEADQUARTERS IN TYRE, AMID SOME  
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ENCOURAGING SIGNS THAT THE PLO WOULD NOT SEEK TO SABOTAGE  
THE CURRENT CEASEFIRE FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST. THE  
ADF BAN ON SENDING MILITARY SUPPLIES OR PERSONNEL INTO  
LEBANON WENT INTO EFFECT. CHRISTIAN, MUSLIM AND DRUZE  
POLITICIANS PRAISED PRESIDENT SARKIS' REJECTION OF  
FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN LEBANESE AFFAIRS. ARMED MEN  
BRIEFLY MOVED REFUGEES INTO A BUILDING WHERE THREE AMERICAN

EMBASSY EMPLOYEES HAVE APARTMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. MILITARY SITUATION.

A. THE CEASE FIRE CONTINUES GENERALLY TO HOLD, ALTHOUGH THE "JOINT FORCES" COMMAND (PALESTINIANS AND LEBANESE LEFTISTS) ANNOUNCED THAT THERE HAD BEEN "INTERMITTENT CLASHES" ON MARCH 24.

B. BASHIR GEMAYEL TOLD AN EMBOFF ON MARCH 24 THAT HE FEARED THAT THERE HAD BEEN INCIDENTS BETWEEN CHRISTIAN AND SHIA IN THE SOUTH. BASHIR NOTED THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY KHAZIM AL-KHALIL, A SHIA DEPUTY FROM THE SOUTH AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE NLP, THAT CHRISTIANS HAD "BOMBARDED" A SHIA VILLAGE THE MORNING OF MARCH 24.

3. UNIFIL ACTIVITIES.

A. ON MARCH 24, A 200-MAN COMPANY OF FRENCH PARA-TROOPERS MOVED TO TYRE IN A TRUCK CONVOY AND SUCCESSFULLY SET UP A HEADQUARTERS IN THE CITY. ARMED PLO FIGHTERS ESCORTED THE FRENCH TROOPS THROUGH TYRE TO THE GHASSAN BORO BARRACKS THERE. A LOCAL PALESTINIAN COMMANDER, ABU SAIF, SAID "WE ARE HAPPY TO TURN OVER THE BARRACKS TO THE U.N. TROOPS FROM FRANCE." LEFTIST LEBANESE FIGHTERS, HOWEVER, REPORTEDLY WISHED TO KEEP THE BARRACKS FOR THEM-  
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SELVES AND DREW GUNS ON THEIR PALESTINIAN ALLIES. THE PALESTINIANS PREVAILED, HOWEVER, AND THE FRENCH GOT THEIR BARRACKS.

B. MEANWHILE, A SECOND CONTINGENT OF 300 FRENCH PARATROOPERS ARRIVED IN BEIRUT ON MARCH 24, BRINGING THE TOTAL OF FRENCH TROOPS IN LEBANON TO 500 MEN. ONE HUNDRED-FIFTY SWEDISH TROOPS HAVE ARRIVED AT NAQURA AS THE FIRST DEPLOYMENT OF A 600-MAN SWIDISH UNIFIL CONTINGENT.

C. CHRISTIAN MILITIA REPORTEDLY AGAIN HARASSED THE IRANIAN UNIFIL COMPANY SOUTH OF GHANDURIYIH ON MARCH 24. THE MILITIA APPARENTLY FIRED OVER THE HEADS OF THE IRANIANS, CAUSING NO CASUALTIES.

4. SOME ENCOURAGING SIGNS FROM PLO.

THERE ARE SOME ENCOURAGING SIGNS THAT THE PLO DOES NOT INTEND TO OBSTRUCT THE CEASEFIRE FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, DESPITE PUBLIC AVOWALS TO FIGHT ON:

--Wafa has carried no formal objections to the entry

OF UNIFIL TO SOUTH LEBANON (SEE BEIRUT 1620).

--PLO FIGHTERS ASSISTED THE FRENCH TROOPS IN SETTING  
UP A HEADQUARTERS IN TYRE (SEE ABOVE).

--THE PLO HAS NOT INITIATED ANY MAJOR MILITARY  
ACTION SINCE THE CEASEFIRE WAS DECLARED ON MARCH 21.

5. ADF BAN.

A. THE ARAB DETERRENT FORCES (ADF) IS SCHEDULED TO  
BEGIN ENFORCING A BAN ON THE FURTHER ENTRY OF  
MILITARY MEN OR EQUIPMENT INTO LEBANESE TERRITORY. THE  
BAN WAS ANNOUNCED MARCH 24 IN AN ADF COMMUNIQUE THAT CAME  
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THE DAY AFTER PRESIDENT SARKIS' PUBLIC REJECTION OF INTER-  
FERENCE IN LEBANESE AFFAIRS BY "ANY COUNTRY OR PARTY."  
THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO FOLLOWED A STATEMENT REPORTEDLY MADE  
IN BAGHDAD BY SADDAM HUSSEIN, THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE  
REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND OF IRAQ'S RULING BA'ATH PARTY, WHO  
SAID THAT A 600-MAN UNIT OF IRAQI COMMANDOS HAD ARRIVED  
IN LEBANON, AND WHO URGED THE PALESTINIANS TO CONTINUE THE  
STRUGGLE AGAINST THE INVADING ISRAELIES.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 1631

B. THE MARCH 24 COMMUNIQUE ALSO NOTED THAT THE ADF WOULD ENFORCE A BAN ON ANY MEDICAL PROVISIONS, FOOD, OR CLOTHING "EXCEPT THROUGH THE (LEBANESE) STATE AGENCIES INVOLVED." THE COMMUNIQUE ADDED IN THIS REGARD THAT THE ADF HAD ALLOWED TWO CONVOYS CARRYING FOOD, CLOTHING AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES TO ENTER SOUTH LEBANON LAST WEEK; THIS WAS APPARENTLY IN REPLY TO CHARGES BY NLP LEADER CAMILLE CHAMOUN AND OTHERS THAT COMBATTANTS AND MILITARY

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SUPPLIES HAD ENTERED THE SOUTH IN RECENT DAYS.

#### 6. POLITICIANS PRAISE PRESIDENT.

CHRISTIAN, MUSLIM AND DRUZE LEADERS ON MARCH 24 PRAISED PRESIDENTS SARKIS' MARCH 23 STATEMENT THAT LEBANON REJECTED INTERFERENCE IN HER AFFAIRS BY ANY "COUNTRY OR PARTY." PHALANGE LEADER PIERRE GEMAYEL STRESSED THAT "THIS IS THE KIND OF TALK THE LEBANESE HAVE BEEN THIRSTING FOR." NLP LEADER CAMILLE CHAMOUN REMARKED, "WE SUPPORT THE STATEMENT A THOUSAND PERCENT." ISLAMIC COUNCIL SPOKESMAN SHAFIQ WAZZAN AFFIRMED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT WAS "WELCOMED BY ALL THE LEBANESE PEOPLE." DRUZE LEADER MAJID ARSLAN SAID THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT "CHARTED LEBANON'S COURSE TOWARDS SALVATION." ECHOING PRESIDENT SARKIS, PRIME MINISTER SALIM AL HOSS ON MARCH 24 ALSO APPEALED TO "FRIENDLY AND BROTHERLY NATIONS" TO RESPECT LEBANON'S DECISION TO SEEK PEACE IN THE SOUTH THROUGH UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 425.

#### 7. REFUGEES

A. REFUGEES CONTINUE TO ILLEGALLY OCCUPY APARTMENTS, AS MANY REFUSE TO MOVE INTO TENT CITIES SET UP BY THE AUTHORITIES. OTHER REFUGEES, SOME WHO HAVE BEEN IN THE

BEIRUT AREA FOR MANY MONTHS, ARE USING THE BREAKDOWN IN PUBLIC ORDER TO MOVE UP THE SOCIAL LADDER - THEY ARE ABANDONING THEIR PRESENT ILLEGALLY-OCCUPIED APARTMENTS AND FORCING THEIR WAY INTO MORE LUXURIOUS ONES.

B. ARMED MEN FORCED THEIR WAY INTO THE DANA BUILDING THE EVENING OF MARCH 24 AND MOVED REFUGEES INTO AN APARTMENT OF A LEBANESE BUSINESSMAN.  
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(THREE AMERICAN EMBASSY EMPLOYEES HAVE APARTMENTS IN THE BUILDING). THE LEBANESE POLICE LATER EVICTED THE REFUGEES HOWEVER.

C. ACCORDING TO UNRWA ON MARCH 25, A "SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER" OF LEBANESE CIVILIANS HAVE BEGUN TO LEAVE SIDON FOR THE SOUTH. IN ADDITION, A "HANDFUL" OF CIVILIAN PALESTINIANS HAVE RETURNED TO CAMPS IN THE TYRE AREA, UNRWA REPORTED.

8. UNLESS THERE ARE URGENT DEVELOPMENTS, THERE WILL BE NO SITREP ON EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 26.  
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## Message Attributes

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